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Review of the Local Arabic Press
Appearing on January 19, 1951AL-NABAT (Editor: Fuhyiddin Nsull, Sunni-Moslem, opposition)

deeply regrets the sentence the Press Court passed on Ghassan Twaini yesterday which is two months' imprisonment, a fine of one hundred pounds and suppression of AN-NABAT for three months. The paper then violently criticizes the present Press Law and urges all the newspaper editors to demand the discontinuation of the practice of combined punishments of imprisonment and suppression. "We ask the authorities, the deputies, the citizens and the progressive youths to help the press free itself from this heavy chain. The newspaper man does not fear the prison but he fears the suppression of his paper. The harm of suppression affects not only the newspaper man but also the many people who work in his newspaper..."

Commenting on the prevailing high cost of living, the paper argues in another editorial that the rises in the prices of foodstuffs and commodities are principally caused by those who are hoarding either because of the fear of war or because of speculation for exorbitant profits. "Those who amass wealth at the expense of the people and who are not contented with moderation, expose themselves to the loss of all their possessions..The people are now aware of everything and Communism is waving its hands to them. Communism finds fertile ground wherever the poor and the needy increase." The paper then reassures the people that:

- 1 - War may not be imminent
- 2 - If war breaks out we will have with us allies who know how to organize things.
- 3 - The resources of the free world will be distributed to all. This has been emphasized by President Truman.
- 4 - Our allies, who fight Communism, will not let us die of hunger or leave us without clothes.

AL-HAYAT (Editor: Kamil Furukawa, Shia-Moslem, independent)

comments on Lebanon's economic position as follows:

"The financial information Kamil Lahud gave at the Chamber of Deputies two days ago is not new.....What is Lebanon's national income? You can't find a single person in all the country who is able to specify it for you. We receive and spend without knowing how and from where we receive. It is therefore natural that the ways of our expenditures are an opposite copy of our ways of receiving. The state is a copy of the general economic machinery.....Further more, the state budget itself is not natural. If

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Lahhad has criticized the appropriation of 50,500,000 LP for salaries, the basic figures of the budget are not themselves natural in a country whose population is one million and whose economic income has been decreasing since the separation (from Syria).

"The State is revolving in a vicious circle. It would not be improved by elections or changes if we failed to reconsider the basis of the entire State and started organizing a new machinery from zero in a manner consistent with our position as a small and poor State which has lost most of the causes of its existence because of the regional, Arab and international politics. If the State does not live busily like the violet, it will not be able to weather the storms."

AD-DIYAR (pro-government, Greek-Orthodox)

writes under the heading the "Specter of War"

"Communist China's decision rejecting the recommendations of the Committee of Three for a cease fire in Korea has had a deep effect in international political circles which hoped that the Chinese government would not stick to its viewpoint and would show some leniency so that the world may be able to avoid war. However cruel and discouraging China's rejection might be, it could not possibly stand as an obstacle in the way of future understanding. That the world fears today is that the big ones might not be able to control their nerves and might expand the Korean war instead of limiting it to the miserable peninsula which has been destroyed by the war."

The paper then reviews the development of the dispute between the Western and the Eastern camps since the end of the second world war and says in part:

"It may be said that despite all its mistakes and evils, Western democracy is better than Communism. But although this statement is true, it remains hollow so long as actualities prove that the mistakes of the Western democracies are still driving the peoples into Moscow's lap. Those who truly believe in the virtues of the democratic system are pained to see the democracies lenient with themselves to an extent which threatens the extinction of the best of what they have. Therefore, the peoples that tremble at the specter of war which is looming on the horizon, turn to the Western democracies and hope that they will abandon their obsolete imperialistic policy and will apply the sound democratic principles outside their frontiers so that the peoples might stop throwing themselves into the lap of Moscow and might keep away from war."

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AL-'ANAL (Maronite) and AL-YAWM (Sunni-Muslim) argue that neutrality toward the Western and Eastern camps is possible and necessary for Lebanon which is small and derives no benefits in involving itself with the great opposing powers.